

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 12, 2018

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Your apparent refusal to hold Russia accountable for meddling in American democracy has allowed President Putin to operate with impunity. Our country has been left vulnerable to another Russian attack on our election system. The latest example—your unwillingness to impose any sanctions required by the bipartisan Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act—adds to a pattern by which you have ignored every tool available for responding to the attack on our democracy. We strongly urge you to reverse course, follow the letter and spirit of the law, and demonstrate that the security of our country and integrity of elections are sacrosanct.

The law could not be clearer that you faced a deadline for imposing sanctions against those who do business with Russia's military and intelligence sectors—the very arms of the Russian government responsible for attacking American democracy. The relevant section of the law states, “180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall impose five or more of the sanctions” laid out in the legislation. January 29<sup>th</sup> marked 180 days. You even had the opportunity to announce sanctions and then invoke the law's waiver authority. You didn't. You failed to meet this deadline. Nor did you meet the earlier deadline to punish those responsible for the cyberattacks during the 2016 elections.

The State Department's explanation that the mere threat of sanctions will stop Russia from interfering in our elections is naive and unacceptable. Those responsible for meddling in our democracy—in the past and going forward—must face consequences.

Congress's intent when we sent you this law was clear. This bill was bipartisan, having garnered more than 400 votes in the House and overwhelming support in the Senate. We expected that you would take action against an adversary that threatens the very heart of our democracy.

However, your actions over the last year have shown that you will constantly excuse President Putin and deny his well established assistance to your campaign in 2016. With this latest action, you are ignoring the law and the prerogatives of a coequal branch of government and letting Russia know you will do nothing to stop additional

interference in our elections—interference that will presumably benefit your own political objectives.

We've given you the tools needed to meet this challenge. If you continue to leave those tools on the shelf, we will push for additional legislative action with more stringent requirements. If you refuse to protect the United States from a hostile foreign government, Congress must act on our own. The future of our democracy is on the line.

Sincerely,

Eric L. Engle

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Paul D. Tonko

Anna Teta

Laurie H. Houghton

John P. Lujan

Frederica Wilson

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Carolyn B. Maloney

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